



2016 ANNUAL REPORT and 2017 WORK PROGRAM

Raleigh Appearance Commission

The Raleigh Appearance Commission is pleased to present its 2016 Annual Report and 2017 Work Program request.

APPEARANCE COMMISSION **ACTIVITY**

Summary

As the City fully transitions to the UDO, the Appearance Commission has experienced a change in its capacity to provide guidance, advice and recommendations regarding the visual quality and aesthetic characteristics of the City of Raleigh.

The following sections provide a brief description of the Commission's efforts and activities during 2016, followed by an outline of Work Program items we wish to pursue in 2017.

- > Working Groups
- > Design Review Performance
- > Observed Trends and Issues
- > Service to Council and Commissions
- > Design Outreach, Education, and Advocacy

I. WORKING GROUPS

In response to the UDO's change in how we review site plans, the Commission has defined new roles in an effort to promote community dialogue and foster design excellence. To that end, the Commission organized itself into and defined the roles for three working groups: Design Policy, Design Advocacy, and Sir Walter Raleigh Awards.

1. *Design Policy Working Group*

> Outdoor Dining Design Review

- 8 public meetings
- Report and recommendation to Council

> Provide courtesy reviews as needed

2. *Design Advocacy Working Group*

> Education (Commission and the Public)

- Commission education on Administrative Alternates review process
- Compile case history to establish a body of knowledge related to Administrative Alternates
- Lectures
- Design Competitions

> Advocate for Commission review of:

- Large, important and publicly funded projects
 - Continued COR Streetscape Design reviews
 - New COR Public Building Design reviews
 - New COR Park Design reviews
 - New COR Area and Corridor Plan reviews

> Collaboration and Partnerships

- Raleigh Historic Developments Commission
- Arts Commission
- Award Juries for Boards and Commissions

> Commission Rebranding

- In concert with City of Raleigh branding
- Development of potential working titles

3. *Sir Walter Raleigh Awards Working Group*

> Fundraising

- \$8,000 in sponsorship
- In-kind donations

> Collaboration

- Raleigh Arts Commission
- Hopscotch Design
- CAM Raleigh

> Program Rebranding

- Socialize - Educate - Celebrate
- SWRA Certificate

II. DESIGN REVIEW PERFORMANCE

Among the Commission's chief functions is the review of the landscape and architectural designs of proposed developments. This effort encompasses site plans and also design-based zoning proposals. Additionally, the Commission provides evaluation and input regarding design components of public projects as requested.

Preliminary Site Plans:

Since last year's report to City Council, the Commission has provided comment on a total of 15 site plans, a reduction of 11 cases from the previous year.

The site plans can be grouped primarily into institutional facilities, large-scale apartment complexes, and suburban highway commercial development.

Site plans reviewed in the past year have included:

- SP-44-15 Charter Square North Tower
- SP-35-15 Poole Rd & S. New Hope Rd
- SP-38-15 Sheetz Hwy 401 & Perry Creek
- SP-32-15 DOCK 1053 Project
- SP-49-13 West Apartments II Revision
- SP-46-15 The Auto Shop
- SP-49-15 Valvoline Instant Oil Change
- SP-72-15 Handee Hugo
- SP-79-15 LIDL Raleigh
- SP-44-15 Charter Square North Tower
- SP-13-16 Family Dollar, 1730 Trawick Road
- SP-14-16 Rolls Royce and Maserati Building, 5601 Capital Blvd
- SP-66-15 Triangle Springs, 10921 World Trade Blvd
- SP-12-16 Ridgewood Shopping Center Addition
- SP-11-16 Wake Forest Road Shopping Center

City-initiated Project Review:

- Moore Square Station Renovation
- Cameron Village/Hillsborough Street Small Area Plans
- Southern Gateway Corridor Study
- Blue Ridge Road Bike/Ped Improvement Project
- New Bern Avenue Pedestrian Improvement Project

Courtesy reviews:

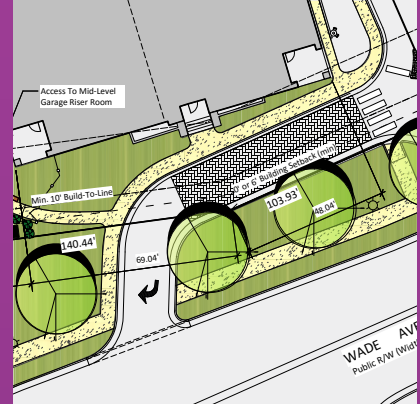
The Commission provided applicant-requested courtesy review in advance of site plan review submittal for three projects. The projects incorporated the Commission's preliminary comments, resulting in a higher level of refinement and contextual design:

- 1326 Dixie Trail Administrative Alternate Courtesy Review
- 10701 Globe Road Administrative Alternate Courtesy Review
- 8001 ACC Boulevard Administrative Alternate Courtesy Review

Administrative Alternates

As the Commission winds down its review of site plans under the old code, it is now hearing more administrative alternate cases under the new UDO. During the past year the Commission has considered 16 administrative alternate cases.

- AAD-4-15 5520 Louisburg Road
- AAD-5-15 2509 Medway Drive
- AAD-6-15 1326 Dixie Trail
- AAD-7-15 Dillon Supply Building
- AAD-8-15 Dillon Supply Building
- AAD-1-16 9400 Falls of Neuse Road
- AAD-2-16 500 East Davie Street – Stone's Warehouse
- AAD-3-16 1436 Rock Quarry Road – YMCA
- AAD-4-16 2001 Booker Drive – Washington Terrace
- AAD-5-16 620 Wade Avenue
- AAD-6-16 10701 Globe Road
- AAD-7-16 Smokey Hollow
- AAD-8-16 1100 Newton Road
- AAD-9-16 Ridgewood Shopping Center
- AAD-10-16 One Glenwood
- AAD-11-16 1600 Crosslink Road



III. OBSERVED TRENDS AND ISSUES

In providing professional critique for proposed development, the Appearance Commission has seen recurring patterns in site plan and building design. The Commission has identified and summarized trends in the design issues observed in the past year, and provides recommendations for how they may be addressed.

Trends

National (and some local) developers and their products: The Commission has reviewed several important projects in the past year, and has identified that many of the products they propose are standard models that lack context and a sense-of-place. Insensitive, non-descript design, materials, and lack of articulation dominate the designs.

Commission's recommendation:

It is critical that more thoughtfulness in the design of these impactful projects would better contribute to the public realm. Better quality of material and attention to design details is necessary in the projects.

Multifamily residential: The Commission has reviewed a number of apartment projects over the past year. While very positive in terms of bringing population and density to our urban centers, the quality of the developments' designs should be improved.

Commission's recommendation:

The use of quality materials, detailed focus to the pedestrian experience, and the creation of and connection to meaningful public spaces needs to be further emphasized and more richly addressed.

Connection to public realm: The Commission has reviewed several large-scale projects with little or no street connectivity. The long frontages of developments without pedestrian street front activity, amenities or connectivity create gaps in the urban fabric.

Commission's recommendation:

The City should design and implement comprehensive streetscape standards for all downtown districts and enforce codified urban design guidelines in the new UDO. The Commission encourages a continued collaboration of designers and developers with the Commission in the form of courtesy reviews of projects. The Commission also welcomes the opportunity to advise the Council on projects and developments with special Public interest, and to review and support the development of design guidelines and text changes.

Administrative alternate requests: The Commission has reviewed over a dozen requests for administrative alternates during the past year, including several for build to, building massing, and screening standards. The Commission expects to review even more similar requests as development plan submittals continue under the UDO.

Commission's recommendation:

The Commission welcomes the opportunity to review and support the development of potential text changes to the UDO that could help result in fewer administrative alternates for these types of requests.

IV. SERVICE TO COUNCIL AND COMMISSIONS

The Appearance Commission has offered service to Council and Commissions on the following juries and task forces in the past year:

- Outdoor Dining Design Review
- Environmental Awards Jury

As the Commission continues its new role under the UDO, we look forward to the continued opportunity to work collaboratively with other boards and commissions to address citywide issues related to design, as well as review of design-related policy and text changes.



V. DESIGN OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The Appearance Commission actively pursues public awareness and education initiatives on a variety of fronts, focusing on design, livability and awareness of appearance in Raleigh. This year's work focused on three initiatives. The following describes the commission's major public outreach efforts.

2016 Sir Walter Raleigh Awards

Held at the Contemporary Art Museum in September 2016, this year's Sir Walter Raleigh Awards drew a packed crowd of over 200 people. The event featured live music, a festive and celebratory ambiance, and new faces in the audience as we joined together to toast great design.

This year marked our third collaboration with Hopscotch Design, and the updated event format reflects the Commission's efforts to be innovative, draw broad audiences, and respond to the excitement in the Warehouse District as the Sir Walter Raleigh Awards, Hopscotch Design Festival converged.


Twelve awards were presented to a range of Raleigh projects, reflecting the best in Residential, Commercial, and Institutional Design as well as Historic Rehabilitation, Landscape Design, Public Service, Community Impact, and Innovation. The awarded winners' project budgets ranged from zero to millions, but all shared a common commitment to creative problem solving, context-sensitivity, and design excellence.



Burt Pinnock Lecture

In March the Commission sponsored a public lecture by Burt Pinnock, AIA, principal with Baskervill in Richmond, VA in collaboration with the annual NCSU Urban Design Conference, which is produced with support from the Raleigh Department of City Planning. The Commission also partnered with the City's Raleigh Historic Developments Commission in producing the lecture event. This year's conference theme was design for evolving downtowns, which offers a framework for looking at downtowns that are experiencing changes such as demographic swings, lifestyle trends, increased mobility, capital availability, resource scarcity, and other shifting factors. Given the transformation that Raleigh's downtown and surrounding neighborhoods are experiencing today, Mr. Pinnock's talk provided parallel examples of what preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures in the City's core can contribute to the vibrancy of Downtown and offer residents and visitors. The talk was held in front of a capacity crowd in the historic Stockroom event space on Fayetteville Street.

THE APPEARANCE COMMISSION,
AND RALEIGH HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION,
IN SUPPORT OF THE NCSU URBAN DESIGN FORUM,
INVITE YOU TO A PUBLIC LECTURE.

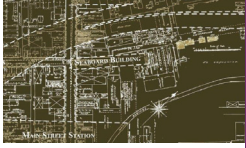
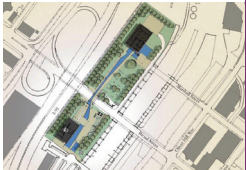


BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN HISTORY AND POSSIBILITY

Burt Pinnock,
AIA, Principal, Baskervill




Thursday, March 17
Reception 5:30pm
Lecture 6-7pm

The Stockroom at 230
230 Fayetteville Street, 2nd Floor
Raleigh, NC 27601

Using Historic Shockoe Bottom in Richmond, VA as a case study, Mr. Pinnock will discuss how the evolving legacy of historic neighborhoods affects the people, places and practices of the city. He will address how designers can work with the public to make these types of places accessible to a wide range of visitors. Mr. Pinnock seeks to explore the intricacies behind the highly polarizing debate that pits historic preservation against urban renewal, while illustrating how a design vision can bridge the gap between past and present.

This lecture is free and open to the public.
Continuing education credits pending.

Sir Walter Raleigh Awards Certificate

As part of the planning for this year's ceremony, the Commission sponsored a design competition for the redesign of the award certificate, which in its current form has been used for over a decade. The Commission had contemplated a change to the certificate design for the past few years, but last year was able to draw from the existing supply of certificates. With advice and assistance from the City's Arts Commission and Staff, the Commission developed a call for designers and solicited submissions from local designers. Feedback on making a change to the certificate was overwhelmingly positive and the new design was well-received. Going forward, the Commission not only plans to put out a call for a certificate design each year, but also include the design of marketing materials unique to that year.

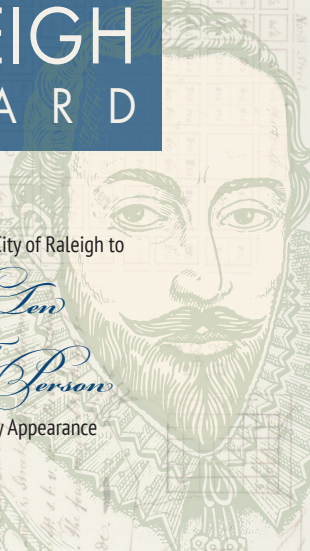

2016
SIR WALTER
RALEIGH
A W A R D

Presented by the City of Raleigh to

The Ten
at
South Person
for Community Appearance

Danny Infante
Mayor, City of Raleigh

Chairperson
Chairperson, City of Raleigh
Appearance Commission



“A beautiful Raleigh is a healthy Raleigh, and the Commission’s ultimate goal is to encourage the use of the public realm by all of Raleigh’s citizens through elevating expectations for long-term, high quality, sustainable appearance. The Raleigh Appearance Commission is honored to provide on-going service to the City of Raleigh, and looks forward to engaging with Council, City staff, and the public in 2016-17 to continue to encourage and promote the highest standards of development for the Capital City.”



Raleigh Appearance Commission

2017 WORK PROGRAM

The Appearance Commission held its 2017 planning retreat over two sessions in January. During the meetings, the members crafted a new mission statement for the Commission, “To Enrich the Quality of Life in our Community through Design.” The group also began developing a vision and a strategy for fulfilling this mission, which included identifying three key responsibilities for the Commission in 2017: Advise; Promote; and Celebrate.

These three roles form the basis for the Commission’s proposed working groups for 2017.

1. *DESIGN ADVISORY WORKING GROUP (ADVISE)*

The Design Advisory Working Group will provide professional design assistance to stakeholders in the community in the following areas:

> Design Review

The Commission will continue to provide design review and recommendations for a variety of development projects:

- Administrative Alternates (UDO)
- Preliminary Site Plans (Old Code)
- City Initiated Projects & Streetscapes
- Courtesy Reviews

> Design Standards Review

As in 2016 with the Outdoor Dining standards, the Commission can provide assistance in the review and recommendation of various design-related development standards.

> City Rebranding Effort

The Commission seeks to be an advisory resource to assist with the City’s new branding campaign.



2. *DESIGN ADVOCACY WORKING GROUP* (PROMOTE)

The Design Advocacy Working Group will help promote and market good design within the community, using the following objectives:

> *Fostering Design Excellence*

The Commission will look to plan and produce community lectures, workshops, tours, and roundtable discussions to further design excellence.

> *Partnerships and Collaborations*

We continue to look for opportunities to collaborate with other interests and energies to further the discussion of design and successful urban development.

> *Design Review for Public Projects*

The Commission plans to advocate for Commission design review of a larger pool of publicly-funded development project types within the City of Raleigh.

> *Commission Rebranding*

The Commission will continue to explore possibilities for rebranding, including a potential name change and/or addition of a tagline and creation of a commission logo.

3. AWARDS WORKING GROUP (CELEBRATE)

The Awards Working group will recognize and celebrate good design in our community through the following initiatives:

> Sir Walter Raleigh Awards

The Commission has implemented a new vision for the Sir Walter Raleigh Awards, including partnerships, new awards categories, and outreach to new audiences. This year the Commission will continue to evolve the event format in an effort to reach extended audiences and celebrate design excellence.

> Student Design Awards

The Commission is considering expanding the recognition of quality design by developing an awards program for student work.

> Design Competitions

In 2016, the Commission sponsored a call for designers for the redesign of the Sir Walter Raleigh Award certificate. The commission wishes to expand opportunities to hold competitions for additional design-related projects.

The Appearance Commission looks forward to providing continued professional service to the City of Raleigh in the coming year. We stand ready to address any special tasks initiated by the City Council, along with performing our usual duties of development review, engaging in community outreach, and pursuing major initiatives. Please use us as a resource as you are faced with important decisions about Raleigh's future growth, character and prosperity.



ON-GOING SERVICE

The North Carolina General Statutes [§160A-452(3)] call on appearance commissions “to provide leadership and guidance in matters of area or community design and appearance to individuals, and to public and private organizations, and agencies.” In the coming year, the Raleigh Appearance Commission seeks to continue to serve in that capacity. We assess appearance issues as they relate to active facades, pedestrian connectivity and quality of experience, and pleasing urban form. It is unanimous within our group that sprawling parking lots, strip malls, covered streams, unbridled advertising, inappropriate grade change devices, and car-focused development do not lead to a beautiful city. We want to see more multimodal transportation opportunities, greenways, parks, and sustainable landscaping principles integrated into our urban fabric and forms. These qualities make for a more beautiful—and livable—city. The Raleigh Appearance Commission stands ready to help make it happen.

We look forward to our new service to the City Council in the coming year, and eagerly await all tasks assigned.

Thank you for your support,
Members of the Appearance Commission

Brian O'Haver, PLA, ASLA
Chair

John A. Koonce
Vice-Chair

